

FORM B – BUILDING

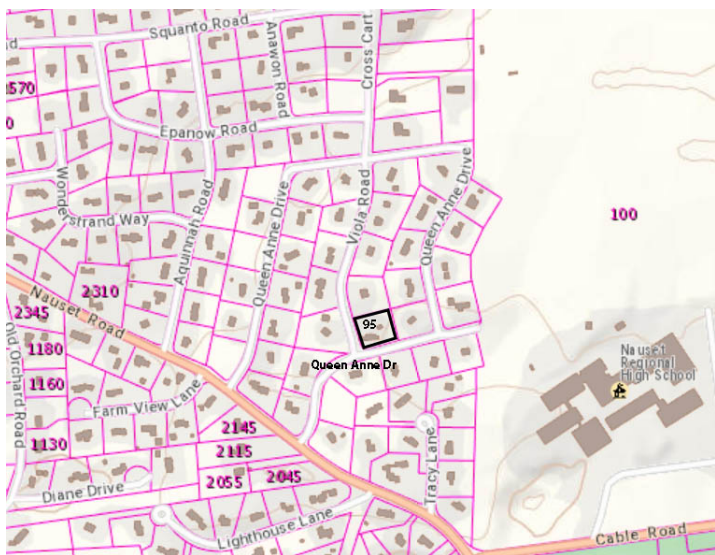
MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Photograph



View from SW.

Locus Map (north at top)



Source: Mass GIS Oliver Parcel Viewer

Recorded by: Kathryn Grover & Neil Larson
Larson Fisher Associates
Organization: Eastham Historical Commission

Date: June 2020

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

6-104

ORLEANS

EAS.784

Town/City: Town of Eastham

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):
North Eastham/Nauset

Address: 95 Queen Anne Drive

Historic Name: Atwood – Brewer House

Uses: Present: single-family residence

Original: single-family residence

Date of Construction: 1777 - 1790

Source: deeds, vital records, censuses

Style/Form: Colonial/Cape Cod

Architect/Builder: unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: stone

Wall/Trim: wood shingle/wood

Roof: asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Barn/shop/garage

Well house

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Entrance removed from front façade

Additions on both ends, late 19th c.

Condition: good

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 0.47

Setting: The house is situated in the midst of a mid-20th-century residential subdivision platted on its original parcel.

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☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Based on outward appearances, it would seem that the central. One-story portion of the house at 95 Queen Anne Drive is the original house, probably built for Hezekiah Atwood around the time he married Rebecca Mayo in 1777. Of course, a more detailed physical inspection is needed to confirm this observation. Alterations to the front façade, particularly the addition of a triple sash window unit, obscure evidence of it having a full center chimney plan or a three-quarter Cape plan. The positions of two six-over-nine sash windows on the west side of the façade suggest the former. The use of twelve-over-twelve sash in alterations and additions present certain anachronisms evidently to maintain an antique appearance in later years. The current center chimney is small in dimension indicating that the original chimney stack was removed. The Atwood homestead was sold to Edward and Mehitable Brewer who raised their family in the house. Story-and-a-half wings were added to the gable ends of the old house in the 1870s and 1880s when the Brewers' children established separate households. Their son Jesse, who occupied one of them was a carpenter and likely had a role in their construction. Both wings have gable roofs, center chimneys and four-bay fronts. The entrance into the easterly wing is near the center; that for the west wing is at one corner. Both have dormers in the front and one-story extensions appended to their outward ends. Maps as late as 1961 show an array of outbuildings behind the house. All that are left is a one-story gables domestic barn or shop and a well house. After a 1961 subdivision, the house is situated on a half-acre lot, mostly open but heavily screened by foliage on its road frontages.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

In February 1846, when Edward Brewer bought a thirty-acre parcel in this Nauset neighborhood from Obadiah Doane Jr. for \$500, a house and other buildings were standing on it, and Doane stated in the deed that it was "originally the homestead of Hezekiah Atwood."¹ Little is known about Atwood, not even whether he was related to Joshua P. Atwood, an Eastham trader to whom he sold his 43-acre homestead in July 1823 for \$900. Joshua P. Atwood sold thirty acres and the buildings the next year to Whitefield Witherell Jr. of Wellfleet, who in turn sold it in March 1842 to Obadiah Doane Jr.² A Hezekiah Atwood is listed in Eastham censuses from 1790 to 1830 and, according to the 1798 direct tax schedules, owned one or two dwelling houses. The only known marriage of a Hezekiah Atwood in this area was in 1777, to Rebecca Mayo, so some part of this house may date to 1777-90.

Edward Brewer (1809-81) was the son of Edward Brewer, a native of North Carolina, and his wife Mehitable Mayo, who married in 1804. In 1832 he married Lydia Ward (1807-93) of Wellfleet, and the 1850 census shows Brewer as a mariner with \$362 in real estate in a household with his wife and their three children, Mary (1833-1904), Jesse E. (1839-1929), and Abbie T. (1842-69). The 1858 Eastham map attaches the name "E. Brewer" to a house on this site. The same five Brewers were in the house in 1855, but in 1856 Mary married Heman S. Gill (1834-1906), and in 1863 Abbie Brewer married Eastham mariner Alonzo Bears (1842-1911). By 1865 the 95 Queen Anne Drive house (addressed until 1961 on Nauset Road) was occupied by Edward Brewer, by then a farmer, his wife, and their son Jesse, a mariner. In 1867 Jesse, by then a carpenter, married Orleans native Rosaltha Ellis, and in 1870 Edward and Lydia Brewer were alone in the house; his son, Jessie's wife, and their infant daughter Bertha Howard Brewer were listed in the next household.

The 1880 Eastham map shows two houses aligned on a north-south axis and labeled "E & J Brewer," for the families of Edward and his son Jesse Brewer. It seems likely that Jesse Brewer—perhaps with his brother-in-law Heman S. Gill, also a carpenter, who lived nearby at 2022 Nauset Road (EAS.781)—expanded and remodeled the original house between 1867 and 1880.

In 1880 Edward and Lydia Brewer shared the 95 Queen Anne Drive house with widowed son-in-law Alonzo Bearse, a 38-year-old fisherman and for many years the head of the Nauset Life-Saving Stations. Edward's son Jesse Brewer was listed just

¹ Obadiah Doane Jr. to Edward Brewer, 10 February 1846, BCD 467:255.

² Hezekiah Atwood to Joshua P. Atwood, 2 July 1823, BCD 999041:289; Joshua P. Atwood to Whitefield Witherell Jr., Wellfleet, 22 March 1824, BCD 999041:471; Whitefield Witherell to Obadiah Doane Jr., 19 March 1842, BCD 33:172. Atwood's 1823 deed states that his homestead adjoined the homesteads of Elkanah Cole and John Gould, and no spouse is mentioned. Hezekiah Atwood was possibly the son of James Atwood (1728-90) and Asenath Higgins (1726-59), but this lineage is unconfirmed. Witherell acquired the buildings and most of the acreage for \$375. The 1830 census lists Atwood alone in his household after Witherell. The latter sold the property in 1842 for \$600.

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before his father with his wife, children Bertha and Irving (1870-92), and niece Linnie O. Bearse, the daughter of Abbie Brewer Bearse and Alonzo Bearse. Edward Brewer died in 1881, his daughter-in-law Rosaltha Ellis Brewer in 1891, his son Irving in 1892, and his wife Lydia in 1893. The 95 Queen Anne Drive house passed to son Jesse and his daughter Bertha, who in 1898 married Eastham carpenter William Brazier Higgins, and Edward Brewer's son-in-law Alonzo Bearse and his daughter Linnie, who in 1897 married Adin L. Gill (1870-1957).

In 1900 the Eastham house was occupied by the widowed Jesse Brewer, his niece Linnie Bearse Gill, her husband Adin, and their son Alonzo Linfield Gill, born in 1898. At that time Bertha Brewer Higgins and her husband William were living in Orleans, where he was a railroad laborer, but by 1910 the Higginses were living with her father Jesse Brewer. The Gills were enumerated next but very likely lived in the same house; they continued to be enumerated consecutively through 1930, where the census taker noted that Higgins and Alonzo Gill were "joint owners."

In 1920 Jesse Brewer, then eighty years old, continued to share the house with daughter Bertha and her husband, described in the census as a carpenter and building contractor. Beginning in 1912 William B. Higgins had begun to acquire both cottages and cottage lots on Campground Road near the old Campground Landing and began to build small cottages on undeveloped land; by the time he died in 1938 he owned eight cottages and all their furnishings in this area.³

In 1929 the various other heirs of Edward Brewer sold their respective interests in his Eastham property to Bertha Higgins and Alonzo Gill.⁴ In that year Bertha Higgins and Alonzo and Adin Gill petitioned the state land court to determine and register the boundaries of what was a 34.23-acre lot.⁵ In 1930 William B. Higgins is listed with \$2250 in real property and as joint owner of 95 Queen Anne Drive with Adin Gill, then a general laborer. Son Alonzo had married Georgia Frances Whiting in 1929 and was working on the Cedar Banks golf course for seasonal resident Quincy Adams Shaw. William B. Higgins was a selectman in Eastham for twelve years and supervised the move of the windmill to the park across from the town hall in 1933; he was then said to be the oldest millwright on Cape Cod and had also managed the reconstruction of a similar windmill on Nantucket. He died in 1938; Bertha Brewer Higgins had died five years earlier.⁶

In 1940 Adin Gill, whose occupation the census taker described as "painting tourist camps," and his son Alonzo and daughter-in-law Georgia occupied 95 Queen Anne Drive; Alonzo was still employed at Cedar Bank Links. Adin Gill died in 1957, and the next year son Alonzo filed for a new Certificate of Title. In 1960 he sold the large tract to Eric and Marie Armour Thorson of Clifton, New Jersey, and in 1961 the Thorsons subdivided it into fifty-two house lots. The "Mayflower Estates" subdivision plan showed Queen Anne Drive running in a loop roughly around the perimeter of the parcel from Nauset Road, with Viola Drive and Linda Road (never constructed) running through the middle of this loop. The Brewer homestead was sited on Lot 28 and was sold to Jeremiah J. Kelley Sr. and Jr. of East Douglas, who sold it to Richard H. Penney in 1962; Penney sold it two years later to Chesley I. Lund Jr. and his wife Barbara of Woburn, who owned the property until 2012. The owners in 2020, Mary and Lee G. Ambler of AmFam Realty Trust, acquired 95 Queen Anne Drive from the Lunds in 2012.⁷

³ See Campground Road MHC Area Form, EAS.N. William B. Higgins's amended inventory included as a "full carpenter's outfit" in good condition, plumber's and electrician's tools, a one-ton truck, a cement mixer, moving gear, and the "contents of pump house supplying water to cottages consisting of 3 electric pumps \$75 and 3 galvanized tanks \$15." On and around Campground Road he bought cottage lots from distant cousin Alonzo K. Higgins in 1912 and land and three cottages from Walter H. Smith in 1922.

⁴ George E. Gill, Franklin NH, to Bertha H. Higgins, 4 December 1929, BCD 470:534 (the grantor being the son of Edward Brewer's daughter Mary and her husband Heman Gill); Lucinda A. Rodman, East Providence RI, to Bertha H. Higgins, 10 December 1929, BCD 470:535 (1/54 interest); Washington I. Bearse, Salem, to Alonzo Gill, 11 December 1929, BCD 470:537 (8/81 interest); Jessie C. Horton, Reading, to Alonzo Gill, 16 December 1929, BCD 470:536 (8/81 interest).

⁵ Commonwealth of Massachusetts Land Court in re: petition 13959 of Bertha H. Higgins, Alonzo Gill, and Adin L. Gill, 24 October 1930, Certificate of Title 2457. Higgins was named owner of a 382/486 share of the property, Adin Gill of 16/486, and Alonzo of 128/436 share.

⁶ On Higgins see "Eastham Town Meeting," *Yarmouth Register*, 6 February 1932, 4; "Civil Works Projects: Eastham," *ibid.*, 9 December 1933, 3; "old Eastham Mill Turns Again," *ibid.*, 23 July 1937, 1; "Eastham Loses Two Citizens," *ibid.*, 11 March 1938, 1.

⁷ Commonwealth of Massachusetts Land Court in re: petition 13959-S of Alonzo Gill, 5 February 1958, Certificate 21573; Alonzo L. Gill to Eric and Marie Armour Thorson, Clifton NJ, 29 November 1960, Certificate 26104; Jeremiah J. Kelley Jr. and Jeremiah J. Kelley Sr., East Douglas, to Richard H. Penney, 12 September 1962, Certificate 29211; Richard H. Penney to Chesley I. Lund Jr. and Barbara L. Lund, Woburn, 6 March 1964, Certificate 32280; Chesley I. Lund Jr. and Barbara L. Lund, 95 Queen Anne Drive, to Mary and Lee G. Ambler, Bellingham, 25 September 2012, Certificate 198664; Mary and Lee G. Ambler, Bellingham, to Lee G. and Mary Ambler, trustees AmFam Realty Trust, 10 June 2014, Certificate of Title 203612. See also "Plan of Land in Eastham," October 1929, LCP 13959-A, and "Subdivision Plan of Land in Eastham," February 1961, LCP 13959-B.

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MAPS

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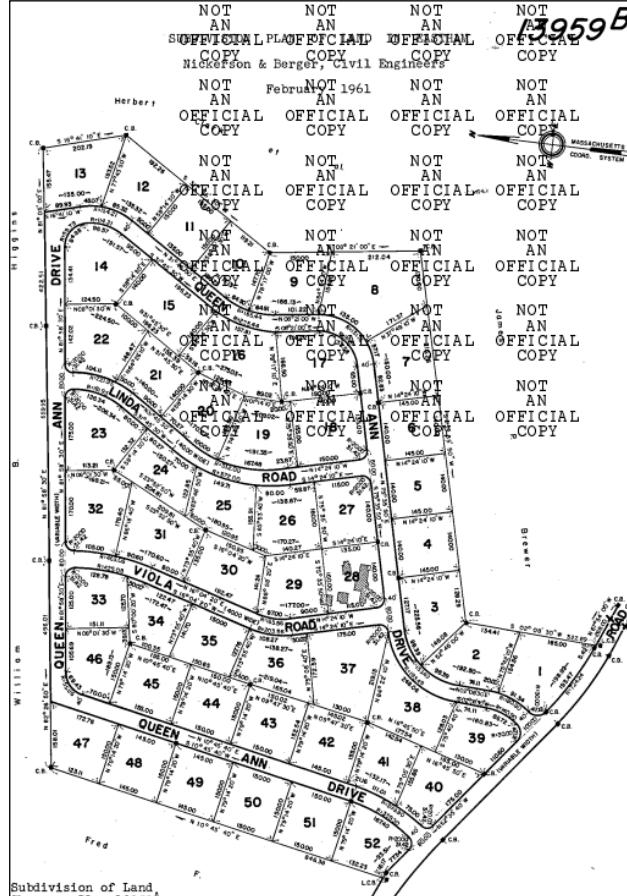
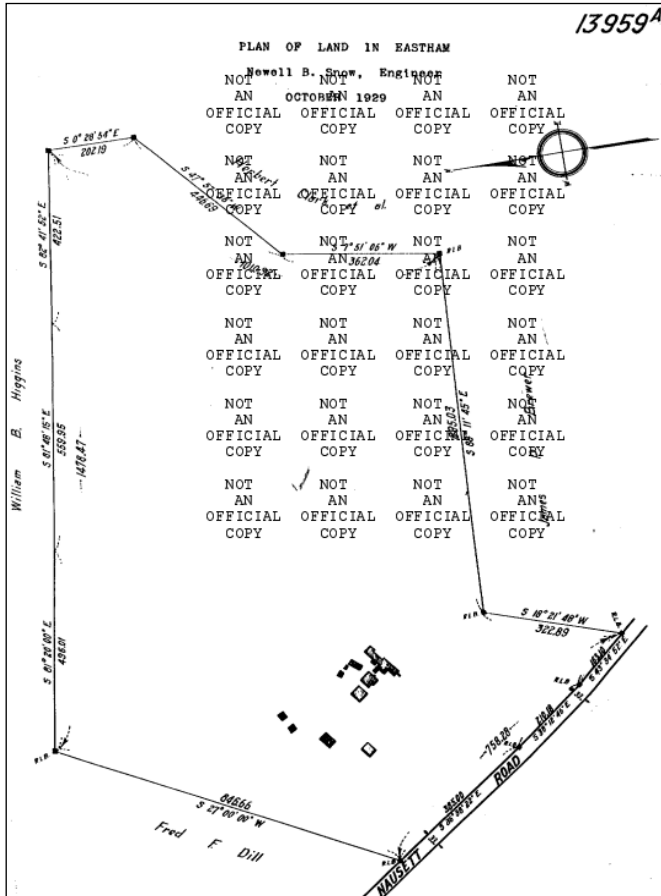
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SUPPLEMENTAL IMAGES



The 1929 Land Court Plan (13959-A) for the Brewer homestead shows the house and numerous outbuildings on an otherwise undeveloped parcel; the 1961 subdivision plan (13959-B) depicts the house and an outbuilding on Lot 28.

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PHOTOGRAPHS

(credit Larson Fisher Associates, 2019 unless otherwise noted)



View from SE.



View from NW.